



# **Chapter 3**

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## **Community Revitalization Corollary Actions**

### **3.0 COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION COROLLARY ACTIONS**

#### **3.1 Relationship of EIS to Local, State, and Federal Community Revitalization Actions**

As described in Chapter 2, the Antelope Valley Major Investment Study (AV MIS) approached the eight purposes and needs with an integrated, problem-solving approach since the stormwater management, transportation, and community revitalization solutions included in the Amended Draft Single Package are so closely inter-related. To only address some elements of the Amended Draft Single Package in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would present an unbalanced view of the completed AV MIS process and outcome. Thus, all components of the Amended Draft Single Package are being analyzed in this EIS, regardless of their eligibility for federal funding. Plans of the Amended Draft Single Package are provided in Appendix I.<sup>1</sup>

The inclusion of community revitalization components in the Amended Draft Single Package represents a necessary departure from typical Major Investment Studies. While this EIS is being prepared to satisfy the environmental review requirements of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and NEPA-404 MERGE process, FHWA accepts the incorporation of non-transportation elements. Community revitalization actions associated with the Amended Draft Single Package are both complex and multi-faceted, and thus are described in a separate chapter.

Some of the recommended community revitalization actions may be eligible for federal funds. For example, some housing programs could be eligible for funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the trails component of the Amended Draft Single Package would be eligible for Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) funds. However, it is likely that most of the other community revitalization strategies would be implemented using state, local, and/or private funds.

#### **3.2 Description of Community Revitalization Elements**

Decisions regarding stormwater and transportation solutions helped guide, in many ways, the available community revitalization options. At the same time, the strength of many community revitalization elements helped determine which of several stormwater solutions or roadway configurations are best. In any case, more than in most Major Investment Studies, community revitalization played an important role, reflecting Lincoln's sensitivity to its residents' desires and strong sense of community.

The AV MIS developed objectives for community revitalization using extensive public outreach and citizen input, and the resulting objectives were classified into six types of actions as introduced in Section 2.2.3. Over 30 community revitalization concepts were developed to address the objectives during the screening of the MIS alternatives (see Chapter 2). The Amended Draft Single Package contains only those concepts from among the 30+ that are physically feasible given stormwater management, transportation, and other constraints.

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<sup>1</sup> Technical reports, which are identified in this EIS, are all incorporated by reference in this EIS. Appendix A provides a complete list of referenced reports. Copies of this EIS and the Antelope Valley Study Team reports are available for public viewing from the City of Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department, Suite 213, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68508. Copies of this EIS and Study Team reports are also available for viewing at city public libraries and available for purchase at Kinko's Copies, 1201 Q Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68508.

Due to their complex and geographically diffuse nature, many of the initial community revitalization concepts were not developed as fully as the transportation and stormwater management strategies during the MIS. Consequently, much of the current and on-going work in community revitalization has necessarily focused on reaching a greater degree of specificity for each concept included in the Amended Draft Single Package. For example, in April 1998 a design charrette (an intense workshop) was held to brainstorm specific development scenarios for the “downtown development area” bounded by 17th, 22nd, K, and S Streets shown on the Amended Draft Single Package map. The charrette brought together the interested public, study team members, urban planners, and economists for a three-day intensive workshop. Prior to the charrette, there was only a general consensus that this area includes a new grocery store, mixed-use development, and additional housing. But, except for the grocery store concept, there had been no real sense of what these elements would look like or how they might work together to take advantage of the new stormwater channel, North-South Roadway, and proximity to downtown and area neighborhoods. The design charrette, therefore, provided more information for the community revitalization concepts for the east side of downtown Lincoln.

Intended as a starting point for discussion, the resulting charrette drawings and concepts in this development area touch upon each of the six community revitalization objectives developed during the MIS. Consequently, the ideas developed during the charrette will surface in each of following sections. Other defining efforts for the total community revitalization program are also described below.

### **3.2.1 Neighborhood Vitality**

The North-South Roadway location in the 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, from K to Q Streets, allows several key concepts desired by the community to be included in the downtown development opportunity area. The Amended Draft Single Package includes the opportunity for a new downtown supermarket, mixed-use development with convenience retail, new residential options, and “Closer-to-Home” strategies (defined later in this chapter). The first three aspects of neighborhood vitality are described below.

**Supermarket.** Central Lincoln area residents strongly desire a new downtown supermarket. However, a large, suburban-style supermarket would be difficult to accommodate in terms of the available economic market, the large amount of land required to support a typical 11 100 square meter (120,000 square foot) building and parking lot, and the incongruity of the building’s scale in the urban neighborhood. Analysis shows that the market for a new urban grocery store in or near downtown Lincoln is currently at the lower end of the range for new supermarkets, barely supporting even a 2 800 square meter (30,000 square foot) building. The support for a new downtown supermarket is based on additional factors, including:

- locating the grocery store at the intersection of two important arterials such as O Street and the new North-South Roadway to improve the store’s exposure to thousands more travelers every day,
- the large, nearby student population from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) that would shop there, and,

- adding to downtown Lincoln's population with the development of new apartments and townhouses nearby.

The housing concepts referenced above are discussed more fully in Section 3.2.3. However, townhouses and other residential concepts that are part of the downtown redevelopment concept help support a grocery store in two ways: by attracting pass-through shoppers and by bringing more purchasing power to the area.

With these elements in place, a downtown 3 700 square meter (40,000 square foot) supermarket is expected to support—a size commensurate with urban grocery stores being built nationwide. With automobile parking, an area of less than two blocks is required. Land in the vicinity remains for small, non-intensive retail use.

An appropriate location for the supermarket is the southeast corner of the North-South Roadway intersection with O Street. Other new development is expected in the northeast quadrant of the intersection; a bank located in the old Rock Island train station is in this quadrant. The visibility this arrangement offers the old train station, a building listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is an added benefit that would help to define this neighborhood's history. This concept was explored during two downtown design charrettes. Figure 3.1 shows this location.

**Figure 3.1**  
**ROCK ISLAND TRAIN STATION AT 19<sup>TH</sup> AND O STREETS**



**Mixed-Use Development.** The Amended Draft Single Package also includes areas for mixed-use development that serves several purposes (see Figure 3.2). It adds housing to the area (which supports the grocery store) and offers nearby living alternatives for UNL faculty, staff, and students. It provides a new base of activity for the downtown, especially the city's Market Place along P Street that is proposed to extend as far east as the new North-South Roadway. It also offers a land use "bridge"—a concept discussed under the Land Use Patterns section—by serving as a transition between the less intensive area defined for new townhouses and the more actively developed UNL City Campus. It also provides a transition between the more intensively developed Market Place corridor and the UNL City Campus. The first floors of mixed-use buildings are appropriate for convenience retail such as dry cleaners, small restaurants, and drug stores. The upper floors are typically residential and office space.

**Figure 3.2**  
**MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT ON O STREET AT WEST EDGE**  
**OF CHANNEL**



**Closer-to-Home Strategies.** The Amended Draft Single Package also encourages Lincoln to continue to incorporate closer-to-home strategies. These include elements such as linking unconnected or fragmented sidewalks. Strategies can also help define neighborhoods using landscaping, and special street light standards, as well as slowing traffic in residential areas. Efforts to improve the area's attractiveness are also encouraged and include rehabilitation of area housing interiors and exteriors.

Closer-to-home strategies would be implemented in the neighborhoods throughout the study area. The City has completed Focus Area plans for the Clinton and Malone neighborhoods. Working with community residents and businesses, needs and priorities for supporting improvements and revitalization of areas before and after the Amended Draft Single Package have been determined. Both plans refer to, and are basically consistent with the Amended Draft Single Package. In the North Bottoms area, there is also an opportunity to convert a UNL parking lot immediately north of the BNSF Railroad tracks into a more neighborhood-friendly use, such as a park or convenience retail.

Another community revitalization strategy reinforcing neighborhood vitality is the idea of a separate City program for relocating structurally sound homes that would be acquired to construct Amended Draft Single Package stormwater channel or roadways. (See Section 4.4.5 "Relocation" for more information about this concept).

### **3.2.2 Land Use Patterns**

The Amended Draft Single Package is intended to encourage positive land-use changes throughout central Lincoln. Some of these changes are reflected in design charrette drawings in which land-use scenarios for the downtown development area (shown on the Amended Draft Single Package map) are presented (see Figure 3.3).

The retail and residential land uses are intended to complement or enhance existing neighborhood, business, and UNL land uses in the area. Future scenarios also build on transportation and stormwater improvements. Future scenarios include:

**Figure 3.3**  
**LAND USE CONFIGURATION FOR EAST DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT**  
**OPPORTUNITY AREA**

**Four-Block Neighborhood Retail Area.** The area bounded by O to Q Streets and 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Streets is shown developed to support a supermarket, drug store, and office or retail space with consideration given to appropriate area delineations. A well established, locally owned bank provides an existing anchor for such development at 19<sup>th</sup> and O Streets. This is also the site of the historic Rock Island train station, which has been maintained by the bank.

**Open, Linear Space Between Trago Park and Antelope Park/Lewis Fields.** This new green corridor along the stormwater channel would be an additional pedestrian-friendly, passive-recreation area. A community gathering-place would be created, providing a central location for events and activities. As currently shown in the Amended Draft Single Package, it would follow the Neighborhood Retail Area next to a 0.75 hectare (1.85 acres) lake between O and Q Streets (see Figure 4.5 for a conceptual drawing of how this aesthetic amenity would appear).

**Residential Development.** Public participants indicated the need to provide low, middle, *and* high-income housing opportunities in this area. For the existing residential areas, the primary goal is to maintain and increase the number of single-family residences. At the outer edges of these neighborhoods, consideration is being given to higher density housing, such as condominiums or row houses. One example of a possible location is along 18<sup>th</sup> Street, from the Near South neighborhood to the UNL City Campus. Additional areas for consideration of higher residential densities exist between the roadway and open channel, within the downtown redevelopment area.

**Existing Business/Commercial Uses.** Several major local employers are located near 21<sup>st</sup> Street at Capitol Parkway. Also located nearby is a business junior college at 18<sup>th</sup> and K Streets. The downtown development area benefits from their presence and contribution to the area. For this reason, future land-use planning would consider any foreseeable, long-term expansion needs for the private companies and school. Numerous auto-related retailers are located along O Street, between 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets. Although there may be fewer such retailers under future land-use scenarios, many would remain viable contributors to the area.

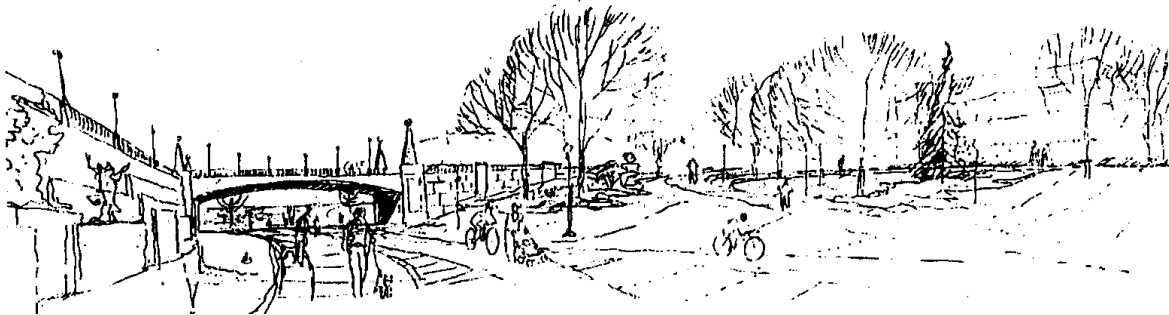
**Possible Expansion of P Street Market Place.** The City of Lincoln and Downtown Lincoln Association are in the process of extending retail and leisure activities along P Street, from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Any future expansion of the Market Place to 19<sup>th</sup> Street would further complement the community revitalization measures of the Amended Draft Single Package.

**Roadways.** Providing safe pedestrian crossings that are able to accommodate users of all ages and physical capabilities is one of the major concerns expressed regarding the construction of the new roadways. Such accommodations are being incorporated into the design of the Amended Draft Single Package.

**Open Channel.** The advantages and disadvantages of an open channel have been discussed at length. Consensus is, however, that an open channel provides far greater benefits to the neighborhoods. The channel is envisioned as an aesthetically pleasing water feature with accompanying trails at some locations (see Figure 3.4). For bridges that would cross the channel, the design could reflect the historic nature of the area.

In addition to possible new land uses, regulatory mechanisms such as overlay districts could be developed to require new development—the supermarket and townhouses, for example—in a several block area around the Rock Island train station to incorporate some of the station’s unique and attractive architectural elements in the new buildings. This would provide a connected historical theme for the area.

**Figure 3.4**  
**NEW CHANNEL AND TRAIL, WITH NORTH-SOUTH ROADWAY AT TOP**  
**OF WALL AT LEFT AND TRAGO PARK/MALONE CENTER AT RIGHT**



With construction of the North-South Roadway along the edges of established areas, it is important to provide buffering to assure nearby residents that the roadway would have little adverse impact on their day-to-day quality of life. The stormwater channel adjacent to the roadway would also help mitigate perceived negative impacts of the roadway (see Figure 3.4). The mixed-use development in the downtown development area can help buffer potentially conflicting land uses from one another. All these tools together offer ways to improve the transition between land uses and other potentially conflicting activities. Land use impacts are discussed more fully in Section 4.4.

### **3.2.3 Downtown Vitality**

Community revitalization in the vicinity of the North-South Roadway and O Street includes a number of concepts. New downtown housing along 18<sup>th</sup> Street and near the stormwater channel in the form of townhouses and mixed-use development would help supply the population required to support activity beyond the typical work day hours. Both the Market Place plan, assuming it is extended eastward, and the new downtown supermarket would benefit from new housing. The housing, in turn, would benefit from a location adjacent to an expanded Trago Park.

### **3.2.4 Trail Continuity**

In the Amended Draft Single Package, the bicycle trail system would see an important trail expansion to better serve downtown bicyclists. A bike path loop would link existing trails with a safe means of exploring the downtown’s perimeter. In addition to constructing a new path parallel to Antelope Creek east of downtown, the loop would border the UNL’s City Campus to its north. From there, it would proceed south through the Haymarket, possibly using the existing area near the train platform, and turn east at G Street using the wide right-of-way to develop the trail. The trail would complete its downtown loop near Lincoln High School where it connects with the Antelope Creek



Rock Island Trail (see Figure 2.1 and Section 4.7). The off-street path offers improved safety and access for all of Lincoln to the downtown area.

This loop system would act as a “hub” of Lincoln’s trail system, connecting the “spokes” of the existing Rock Island, John Dietrich, Salt Creek, and MoPac trails. These connections would require short extensions of the existing trails to link them to the new hub trail. The extensions and cost estimate are in the Amended Draft Single Package. This hub would permit access to all points of the UNL City Campus and the Central Business District of downtown, with minimal on-street use. The Rock Island Trail would connect to the loop trail in Antelope Park. The John Dietrich trail would extend along Holdrege Street to connect to the loop at the channel. The Salt Creek trail would connect to the loop via G Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets, where it would meet the new trail eastward from 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The MoPac trail would tie in to the loop at the channel, near 18<sup>th</sup> and X Streets. Thus, bicyclists would make better and safer intra-city connections.

### **3.2.5 Recreation**

The Amended Draft Single Package would add an 13-hectare (33-acre) Northeast Community Park to serve the residents of the Clinton, University Place, Hartley, and other area neighborhoods. It would be south of the railroad tracks, between 28<sup>th</sup> and 333<sup>rd</sup> Streets. The Amended Draft Single Package roadway configuration in this area would provide park access by extending Huntington Avenue westward.

The park would have several programmed recreation activities, including multiple softball and soccer fields, a picnic facility, restrooms, a playground, sand volleyball courts, and multi-use sports courts that would accommodate tennis or basketball. The John Dietrich bikeway runs along the south and east edges of the park, and would connect to a new trail along Dead Mans Run north to the Salt Creek and Superior Street trails.

UNL and the City Parks and Recreation Department are exploring co-location and shared use at this site. The North-South Roadway would displace three UNL softball fields near 19<sup>th</sup> and Vine Streets. The Northeast Community Park would provide replacement softball fields for UNL (see Figure 3.5 for the southern portion of the park concept).

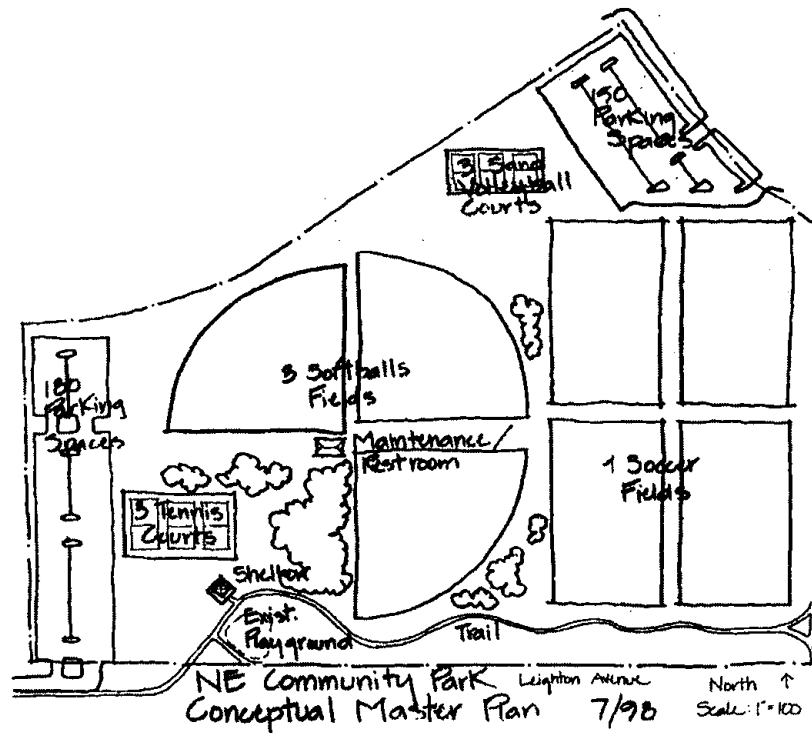
Trago Park would see expansion on its south edge to O Street with the implementation of the Amended Draft Single Package. Not only would Trago Park provide an attractive corridor for the stormwater conveyance channel and parallel trail, but the expanded park would also benefit nearby neighborhoods and expand the opportunity for area residential developments.

### **3.2.6 Health and Human Services**

“Wrap-around centers” are shown at five locations inside or near the study area. Wrap-around centers create efficiencies by having several agencies locate and work together to provide community services at a single location. These services are neighborhood-based and customized to meet the particular needs of each neighborhood.

The five wrap-around centers are strategically located in the neighborhoods that community-based agencies already serve and are also on hiker/biker trails to encourage walking access. Wrap-around services typically include job training, literacy programs, childcare, computer literacy programs, tutoring, library services,

**Figure 3.5**  
**POSSIBLE NORTHEAST COMMUNITY PARK LAYOUT**



year-around meal provision, expanded recreation opportunities, health care, parent support groups, social service offices, adult care, senior centers, and other community events. The City of Lincoln and Lincoln Public Schools commissioned a community study of the wrap-around concept in the spring of 1998 and established a five-phase framework for developing wrap-around services. The Amended Draft Single Package proposes wrap-around centers at Elliott Elementary School, historic Whittier Junior High School, North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Center, Indian/Armory Center, and the Clyde T. Malone Community Center.

In addition to the wrap-around centers, the Amended Draft Single Package proposes that a new health clinic be developed in the study area to serve neighborhood residents. There are also opportunities to enhance and expand the services currently provided by the Urban Indian Medical Center, located at 19<sup>th</sup> and Q Streets.